

INFORMATION REPORT INFORMATION REPORT CENTRAL INTELLIGENCE AGENCY

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COUNTRY	Rumania	REPORT		25X1
SUBJECT	Living Conditions in Bucharest	DATE DISTR.	16 November 1955	
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SOURCE EVALUATIONS ARE DEFINITIVE. APPRAISAL OF CONTENT IS TENTATIVE.

Wages

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1. The supply of food and other commodities has improved considerably since rationing was abolished. Although government shops and markets are well-stocked with all types of merchandise, including imported luxury items, the purchasing power of residents of Bucharest is still extremely low. Wages have not kept abreast of prices, and the majority of salaried workers and employees earn less than the minimum needed for subsistence.
2. A monthly income of 1,000 to 1,200 lei is necessary to provide a family of two with the bare necessities of life. While this sum will provide two people with food, rent, water, and electricity, it will not provide them with clothing and shoes. Only engineers, architects, and certain high officials, such as chief accountants in important enterprises, earn salaries of 1,000 lei and over. Average monthly salaries are as follows: office worker, 500 to 600 lei; experienced pharmacist, 800 lei; doctor, 800 to 900 lei; skilled worker, 500 to 700 lei; and unskilled worker, 250 to 300 lei. Doctors are now allowed to treat private patients, and their earning power is improved over that of other professional men.

Prices

3. The following prices apply to commodities which are available in government shops:

Black bread	2.00 lei per kilogram
Butter	27.00
Sugar	10.00
Oil	11.00
Sausage	12.00 to 27.00
Pork cutlets	30.00
Other meat	13.00 to 15.00

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STATE	EV	X	ARMY	X	NAVY	X	AIR	X	FBI		AEC		ORR	EV	X
(Note: Washington distribution indicated by "X"; Field distribution by "#")															

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Fish	5.00 to 9.00
White flour	4.00
Potatoes	1.00 to 1.50
Rice	9.00
Grapes (poorest quality)	5.00 to 6.00
Apples (poorest quality)	2.00 to 2.50
Milk	1.20 per liter
Wine (poorest quality)	6.00
Spirits	15.00
Alcohol (96%)	50.00
Kerosene	1.30
White bread	3.20 lei per loaf (less than 1 kg.)
Eggs	.65 (summer) to 1.00 (winter)
Rolls	.33
Lemons	20.00
Oranges	20.00
Cloth for men's suits (imported)	400.00 per meter
Cloth for winter overcoat (")	700.00
Women's shoes (imported)	400.00 to 500.00 per pair

4. Milk is in short supply and is usually bought on the free market at 3.00 to 4.00 lei per liter. Good quality fruit must be bought on the free market at 5.00 to 6.00 lei per kilogram for apples and 8.00 to 10.00 lei for grapes. Ordinary red table wine costs 18.00 lei per liter. Although textiles of local production are considerably cheaper than those imported, they are very poor in quality. Women's shoes made of local materials are only half the price of imported shoes, but they have rubber soles or leather soles of poor quality. Cheese made from cows' milk is available only on the free market at 15.00 lei per kilogram.

Relaxation of Controls

- The former unceasing inquiries as to whether a person is working (Incadrat) have become infrequent, and the fact that a person is supported by relatives or receives food parcels from abroad has become an acceptable answer. The so-called voluntary work (Munca Voluntara) has also decreased in frequency, and the meetings of employees after work hours have declined considerably.
- Independent craftsmen have been allowed to re-open their workshops, and licenses for new workshops can be obtained readily upon condition that no hired labor is utilized. Doctors have also been encouraged by tax decreases to treat private patients in addition to their official work.
- Residents are no longer required to identify themselves on all occasions, and document checks on the streets, in restaurants, and in public places has ceased. Questioning by police in private homes has become comparatively rare.
- The house or block warden (Responsabil), who is charged with the maintenance of the residents' register (Carte de Imobil) plays an important role in supervising the individual resident of Bucharest, and police inquiries about residents are generally directed to him, and police precinct stations maintain contact with him through one of their officers (sectorist) appointed for this duty. Wardens are not necessarily chosen for their loyalty to the Party; the landlord is the warden for private homes, and anyone with a good civil record may qualify as warden for large blocks of apartments owned by the state.

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Registration

9. It is extremely difficult to obtain an apartment or even a single room in Bucharest. The official allotment of living space is eight square meters, and no family without adolescent children is permitted the use of more than two rooms. A non-resident of Bucharest can obtain permission to move to Bucharest only upon proof that he has found housing in the capital.
10. A person who wishes to rent or exchange housing must register with the Raion housing agency (Spatiul Locativ), but his chance of success is quite limited; there is almost no new residential construction, and the few apartments which become vacant are allotted to persons with Party or police connections. It is also difficult to obtain a room in a hotel, since they are generally filled with youth delegations or non-residents on official business. The most effective method of obtaining housing is to pay "key money" (Filo-Dorma) either to an official of the Raion housing agency or to a person who earns his living by acting as an intermediary.
11. Any change of address, either temporary or permanent, must be registered within 24 hours of the change. The house warden enters personal data of the new tenant, obtained from the identity card (Buletinul de Identitate), in his register and sends both the register and identity card to the police precinct station. The identity card is then stamped and signed, and the stamp certifies that the change of address has been registered in accordance with the law.

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